



**Executive Summary**  
**Another Chance for Education (ACE)**  
**Legal Aid and Defender Association, Inc.**

Another Chance for Education (ACE) is a model program providing legal intervention to get children, ages 7-17, back into school. These children are truant, or have been dismissed because of attention disorder or disruptive behavior. Others have been dismissed for allegedly breaking school rules. Many of these kids wind up in the juvenile justice system where they become clients of Legal Aid and Defender's Juvenile Law Group as misdemeanor offenders.

The program evaluates and selects children from LAD's existing caseload who hold the best promise of returning to and staying in school. A panel of attorneys and our staff social worker evaluate the children. The type of legal service they receive includes litigation to get clients into special education services, individualized education pleadings, representation at school administrative hearings for school reinstatement, probation hearings, and other related due process work.

Typically, when children are not in school, they engage in misdemeanor behavior and find themselves in the juvenile justice system for such activities as shoplifting and vandalism. The court often recommends that such a child receive a personality or psychiatric evaluation before returning to school, but this does happen because there is no follow-through. Often the child has little or no care from a full-time parent or guardian. These children need evaluation for placement into alternative education services, special education programs, day treatment or mental health services before they can return to regular school. Through ACE, clients are placed in these services.

Many of the children targeted by ACE are juvenile offenders whose cases have been litigated within the juvenile justice system and who have already been represented by the Juvenile Law Group of Legal Aid and Defender. In the opinion of the court or the attorneys who represented them, these clients are in need of special follow up care before they can return to school as productive students. Without such care they will return to their disruptive behavior and find themselves back in the juvenile justice system.